



# WUJAL WUJAL ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL Newsletter February 2011

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## Community celebration for 'Bana Yirriji' Arts & Cultural centre opening

With hanging space for up to 60 paintings, cabinets for any number of artifacts and pottery, an air-conditioned artists' space and a fully-fitted café, Wujal Wujal's new Arts & Culture Centre – named Bana Yirriji – is set to make a huge difference to the number of tourists stopping and spending money in the town.

Wujal Wujal Mayor Desmond Tayley said it was good to see nearly eight months of work finally come to fruition as the Centre went through its final transformations.

"It hasn't just been about the building, it's been about getting our artists and others ready for the employment opportunities this will generate for our community," he said. "Our artists have been working hard on their visual art, pottery, and even music to make sure we have enough stock to keep it going.

"The end product will be very good for the community and I think we are all looking forward to seeing that building open for business."

At a community opening held in mid-January Traditional Owners remembered family members who had passed away, showed respect for Aboriginal Culture and welcomed both Indigenous and non-indigenous visitors with a warming ceremony by Bobby Ball, Alfred Smith and guest of honour Ronnie Harrigan. *(Continued next page)*



*(From previous page)*

Mayor Desmond Tayley said the new Centre was funded from Q150 and Planning and Infrastructure money to a total of \$1.75 million.

“I’m very impressed with the building itself, the verandah especially looks like it will be a great place for people to stop for a tea or a coffee and something to eat,” Mr Tayley said.

“And it’s set in a location where the tourists come past on the way to the waterfall.”

Community Development Officer Garry Ashworth said production for the Culture Centre was well underway, and acknowledged all those who had supported and contributed to its development.

“I think the 2011 year is going to be a great year for Wujal Wujal with the opening of this new Centre,” he said.



“There are 60 hanging spaces, but our main area is for about 30 paintings, so basically we’ve already got an exhibition now.

“15 pictures were provided to UMI Arts last year.

“They’re doing quite well in the sense of production.

“And Troy, the manager of the Arts Centre in Hopevale has said to us they started with 18 artists and a year later they now have 80.

“He said it was just having the space to be able to do the artwork and the expertise from those arts centres to be able to sell and promote the artists.



“So we can look forward to a really big year and the year after that we’ll, you know, strength to strength.

“I can see the Arts & Culture Centre being a major employer, a major trainer and, I think, a major centre area for people to enjoy the community of Wujal Wujal.”



# Old health clinic to become new training centre for CDEP, Council and community

Refurbishment of the old Health Clinic has been underway since late last year.

The building will be a training centre for CDEP and other users on the community.

Mayor Desmond Tayley said he would be glad to see the old building, which is central to the community, being used again.

"CDEP has funded the renovations and they'll use it as a rent-free office and training space," he said.

"But it will also serve as a conference or training space for the whole community.

"And Council feels it might be suitable for use as the court room as well.

"I think it's historical and it's good to see it refurbished again, it has a lot of memory in the community."

Project Manager and builder Mal Pask (*pictured with WWASC Housing Officer Mark Zippel*) said CDEP and FAHCSIA were supporting the redevelopment.

"Mark and the Wujal Wujal building team have been doing the work on it," he said.

"The plans are drawn and finalised.



"These guys have taken a lot of the inside out and done a lot of the demolition work. "We had to remove asbestos off the floors, which has all been done."

He said the final building would consist of two training rooms, CDEP office and two bedrooms for motel-type accommodation.

"The idea is for that to be trainer accommodation," he said.

"It's an all-weather project so hopefully by the end of March or early April it will be in use."

## CDEP on the right path

CDEP participants have been working on a sealed bike/footpath which will eventually extend from the main town area to the Falls. Participants recently invited youngsters on holidays to make their mark on a section of the path (opposite the petrol station).



*Pictured: Left: Leam Chookie, Axel Buthmann; Below Left: Eric Murgha; Justin Ball; Below Right: Alfred Smith; Harold Tayley*



## *A quick word from...*

# WWASC CEO

# Kevin Wormald

As far as Council as an organisation is concerned we continue to get compliments from the government agencies about our standards and our programs being up to date, the way we're managing our programs and the responsibility that we're showing, writes CEO Kevin Wormald.

And that's a very good feeling because it means the government is happy with the service delivery, which is what we're about.

And that's across our whole range of programs – the Justice Group, Life Promotion and Aged Care and our women's services and men's services programs, most of which are through the Department of Communities.

All our community service areas are coping very well at the moment.

We're also getting lots of favourable comment about the condition of the community itself.

The condition of our parks and gardens and roadsides is very good and all our streets have been resealed in the past six months.

The Arts and Cultural Centre is virtually complete so there will be a traditional Bama opening for that very soon, including a smoking ceremony and an open house for locals to see it before we move in and start operations.

So what's happening at the moment is all very positive and looks like it will continue that way into 2011.

Last year our audit came in as unqualified, and our accounts were completed by the due dates.

## **Accounting system changes in place**

WWASC Corporate Services Manager Daphne Harvie advises that Council has changed over to a new system of full cost accounting.

This has resulted in having to revise Council's job register and chart of accounts, introduce plant hire charges and train staff with regard



*L-R: Senior Indigenous Advisor for the Department of Communities Sport & Recreation Services Tom Lui next to Wujal Wujal CEO Kevin Wormald, meeting with colleagues Edward Monaei (Senior Resource Officer, Sport & Recreation Services) and Chris Coutts (Indigenous Adviser, Department of Communities) in December last year*

Our annual report was also completed, as required, by the end of November.

So for 2011 we have much to look forward to.

We've got assurances that the Bloomfield River Bridge will be commenced by Main Roads within 12 months.

The Woobadda Creek Crossing is another one that's programmed and fixed in by Cairns Regional Council for this coming financial year.

Our boundaries have also changed – and with that an extension of the alcohol restricted area as well – so the Esplanade on the northern side of the Bloomfield River, between Wujal Wujal and Granite Creek, is now in the hands of Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire.

It was public open space land but it's land that we've traditionally used, so it's good to have that within the Shire.

to the changes.

New hurdles and challenges will arise, however it will produce results that will be meaningful to Council and help them in their decision-making.

And lastly, once again Council has received an unqualified audit report.

# Exhibition boosts Wujal Wujal artists' reputation

'Where the rainforest meets the sea – Yalanji Country' exhibition was officially opened by Mayor Desmond Tayley at UMI Arts Shop and Galleries in Cairns late last year.

Putting together the exhibition in conjunction with UMI represented a steep learning curve for the four artists involved and some excellent experience in the lead up to the opening of Wujal Wujal's new Arts & Culture Centre.

The crew and Board of Directors at UMI Arts congratulated the four artists and the Wujal Wujal community on a beautiful show.

"Thank you very much for your time, energy and participation in the UMI Arts Exhibition Ready in Community program," they said to Wujal Wujal artists on their website ([www.umiarts.com.au](http://www.umiarts.com.au)).

"You deserve to feel very proud."

Artist Faron Nunn said working with UMI in Cairns gave him lots of good ideas and he was excited to be a part of it.

"My artwork, it's about my culture, background, and all the things that I do and the animals that are situated around us," he said.

"I started a couple of paintings and I got a couple

WHERE THE RAINFOREST MEETS THE SEA

## Yalanji Country



hung at UMI Arts in Cairns.

"It's a lot of work, a lot of very hard work and all the time you always got to have an idea with you.

"Once you got your ideas you're it, you know what you're doing."

Mentor and supervisor for the emerging Wujal Wujal artists' group, Des Herbert, said the artists had done a "wonderful" job at UMI Arts.

"They had a week of preparation down there, hanging their pictures, putting all the wires on the back and measuring up walls and working out exactly where the pictures had to hang," he said.

"I think they learned one heck of a lot in the week of prep, then there was panic stations on the last day to get everything just right for the exhibition, and then it rained like mad for about three hours, absolutely poured.

"But they ended up with 45 or 50 people turning up which, I think, considering the conditions it was pretty special."



Artist Faron Nunn with Mayor Desmond Tayley and fellow artists Maurice Gibson & Cedric Friday (Pic courtesy UMI Arts)



Late last year we had six people do a week-long mediation course with tutors from the Justice and Attorney General's Department in Brisbane, says Community Justice Group Coordinator Joan Beacroft.

We wanted to get some more mediators in the community for this time of the year when we have a few problems, you know, tempers flare up and it's called mango madness.

The mediators we have are Dylan Harrigan, Sharon Anderson, Dawnie Harrigan, Wade McKinnon, Jody Minniecon, and police sergeant Luke Tulacz, and myself makes seven of us.

We had a grant to cover all the expenses so that was wonderful, and we did it here in the community in case something arose during the week so we could see real mediators in action. Nothing came up, which was good.

When the trainers/mediators came they said how wonderful it was because the community was so together – they said we seemed to be switched on and interconnected!

So we had a big impact.

The Justice Group would also like to thank the Women's Group for the use of their Women's Centre for holding our courts over the last 18 months. They've bent over backwards and we've been really grateful for the help they've give us so thank you very much and we wish the womens' group a great 2011.

The number of people going to court this past month was approximately half of normal.

Apparently that was right across the Cape that the number of charges being laid have halved for some reason.

We're not quite sure why but only 12 people in court in December, is considerably lower than our usual 27-30, which is really good.

We think it might be everyone is just getting their act together.

For example last month we had Meshach Friday's



*Pictured L-R: Back: Doreen Ball & Lily Yougie;  
Front: Kathleen Walker & Alma Ball*

21st at the Bloomfield Hall.

It was the third time this year we've used that hall and we had no incidents.

We've never been able to hire the hall at Ayton but we've not had one incident, and not one drunk driver.

No Bama were arrested at all over those three different occasions and we want to thank the community for taking responsibility for their family's actions and, you know, the young boys who usually get up to no good.

I'd like to welcome our three new CJG members, Mary Barlow, Alma Ball and Jody Minniecon.

And finally acknowledge Sergeant Luke Tulacz, who has been appointed as sergeant for Wujal Wujal along with his permanent constable Jason Manders, who is a Cairns boy.

Luke's wife Kelly will be joining him after he comes back from leave at the end of January, and they also have a little boy.

Luke has been working here for the last few years, the last four or five years, so he's not a stranger to the community.

It's one of our big concerns, when police who have only worked in white cities come into the community but these two have had experience working with Aboriginal people, which makes it easier.

Happy New Year everyone.

**FOOTNOTE: Cr Allister Gibson has stepped up to take on Joan's role with the Community Justice Group over the Christmas/New Year break. Cr Gibson said he expected the role would be challenging, but he was looking forward to it.**

# **Focus on:** **... Community Development ...**

**Community Development Officer Garry Ashworth says there were great successes for Wujal Wujal in 2010 with more to come in 2011. By success, he writes, I mean in particular that some of our work has created an awareness of the job opportunities across different avenues for people in the community.**

And some of those activities have given people more confidence in themselves.

When we look to the future that's what it's about, so some of our activities are around confidence, building morale and engaging in different directions.

One of the key community projects which is coming together beautifully is the new Arts & Culture Centre.

The Centre has had its community opening, with an 'official' opening by Queensland Premier Anna Bligh, yet to be confirmed for April or May.

We'll have a pretty good handle on the capability of the Centre by that time and we'll have a fair number of staff trained up to be able to cope with a grand opening like that.

One of our primary focuses for 2011 will be youth.

The Community Justice Group

has already planned for a number of activities, which is an indicator of how much a lot more exposure to the community has helped them to grow in confidence.

So they'll be looking at activities around crime prevention and substance abuse, which will complement some of Nikki's and Dawn's different roles.

We've looked at some money through the Attorney General's office as well as Communities Office.

We all just want to make sure that young people have the opportunity to be able to develop their skills and not feel like they're left out, even if they left school early or had some problems along the line..

Councillor Allister Gibson will be standing in for Joan Beacroft over the period of her long service leave.

It's really good of him to stand

up and do that.

Cr Gibson was instrumental in helping youths get to some of the footy carnivals late last year. Another staff member we have who is doing some great work with our kids and youth is Indigenous Knowledge Centre coordinator Carol Toby.

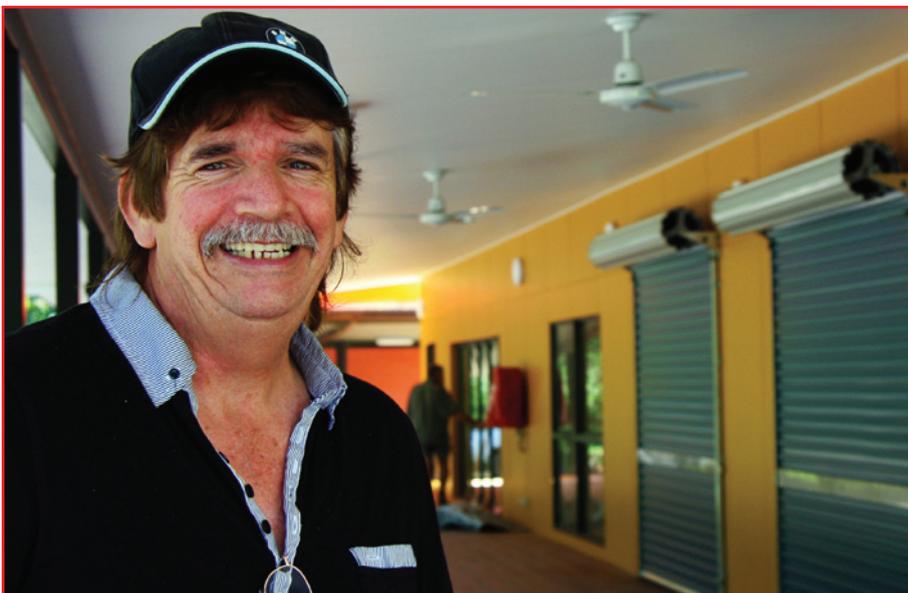
At the moment we're implementing the internet usage to help us find a little bit of revenue so we can supply a service for pictures.

In terms of working with our elders, Sharon at HACCS is always inspirational in her endeavours. She has had some great success in some grants for the upgrade of her kitchen and some of the other facilities she's got there. It looks like 2011 is going to be the big year for the HACCS to develop their registered kitchen and their workplace health and safety in that area as well.

I know that they're looking forward to vehicle upgrading and some other bits and pieces. Our radio station, RIBS, is also an exciting little area.

Overall if you look at all the different areas we've been dealing with – kindy, sports and rec, library, justice, life promotion, HACCS, men's and women's groups and the harms reduction office area, we're doing very well.

It's great to know that all those different agencies are leading the way in the community.



# Be healthy and happy, says Dawn

**Life Promotions Officer for the Council, Dawn Harrigan, has a wish-list for 2011 that starts with everyone having a happy new year and staying healthy!**

She said her job was primarily to work as a referral service.

"It's just a referral service for any of our mob with mental health issues or anything related to mental health, and we just try and help them out on that sort of line," she said.

"I was working over the holidays, just to let people know in the community that they're not alone, that there is help out there for them.

"And not just for a person involved but also for families involved. There are lots of different services available and all our service providers, which include Queensland Health, the Cooktown Community Centre in Cooktown, and Mental and Community Health in

Cooktown." She said most of them had Bama working for them and they have helped people out before.

"Last year was a big year," she said. "Hopefully this holiday time will have a lot more things going for the children and the younger ones. I think there's a few camping trips lined up but it's just a matter of tapping into the right areas and finding things to do – just keeping yourself occupied.

"Christmas and the New Year is a time for family and friends, getting out there and doing things, not sitting back and dwelling on things."

Community Development Officer Garry Ashworth said Dawn's work was about helping



families and individuals, to give a lot more hope and to show there was always light at the end of the tunnel.

"Dawn's done some really good things with different family groups and individuals in that and suicide prevention as well as building morale, so that's been really good."

## A little hip of country...

**Continuing her studies in Cairns and keeping things on track is Noelana Flinders' main focus in her continuing role as RIBS coordinator.**

Pictured here with new staff member Russell Bulmer, Noelana said she had completed her Certs II and III and was looking forward to more training 2011.

She said while there had been some staff changes late in 2010, the new crew was keen and ready to go.

Community Development Officer and station manager Garry Ashworth said the station was well-funded.

"On top of that there may be some extensions for the archiving and interviews area that we're currently trying to find funding for," he said.

"Meanwhile they're busy developing shows and different sort of programs to put over the air.

"It's becoming quite professional.



"We've got a few more new trainers to come up this year to help them develop the Morning Show and all the rest of the things they're putting together – hip hop and country.

"So it's really another great success for our community."

# Joining the fun and staying active

**Harms Reduction Coordinator Nikki Gong has had a huge 2010 and is looking forward to an even bigger 2011.**

In December last year the Womens' Group in particular had an end of year celebration at Mungumby Lodge which she said was a great finish to some of the activities they had been doing over the past few months.

"Our Wednesday activities have been going really, really strong with the Ladies Group and we've been visiting local areas," she said.

"We've been up Shipton's Flat, China Camp and to Kangaji Beach. "It's just been about getting together and having a really nice time.

"We've also had a Style Up program where we had Aly, a hairdresser from Ayton, come in and do some hair drying, cuts and colours.

"The sewing hasn't really taken off, but that day we've put aside is going to that cultural activity of going out and it's been really beneficial to get out of the community and get out and go and visit some nice places.

"The cooking is going really well on a Monday.

"We've had a cooking demonstration from the dietician and the diabetes educator.

"They're having a great time at the moment."

She said the recently re-housed Mens' Group had enjoyed almost as much success.

"The Men's Group have the weekly pool competition and those numbers have been really good," she said.



"They just had an AGM and elected Jonathan Bassani as their president, Kelvin Greenwool as their vice president, Reagan Kulka as their secretary and Eric Murgha is their treasurer.

"So they've got a new executive committee now, as does the women's group.

"We're working with a target group of people and hopefully they find that participating in the activities is a benefit to them and for their social and emotional wellbeing.

"That's pretty much what it's all about.

"All we can do is offer these types of diversionary activities and it's completely up to the individual to join up.

"Mostly it's about offering an alternative to drinking and smoking and other harmful substance misuse."



## **Men's Group making good use of time and new space**

**Newly-elected Mens' Group vice-president, Kelvin Greenwool (left), said they had already had up to 20 adults turn up to their weekly activities and that he was looking forward to a busy 2011.**

"Every Wednesday night we get members together," he said. "We have a pool comp and what I'm really looking at is trying to get us to go up to different communities to try and meet with other mens' groups. They could have a yarn with

them and it will probably encourage them to, you know, follow them and they come from community so to encourage them to come more."

He said they were also trying to expand their activities. "They can do like artefacts up there, we're planning to do some painting on the wall and get some instruments up there so the men can have a jam. We just got two pool tables, a table tennis and two dart boards at the moment. They're enjoying it."

# New books, latest mags and activities drawing families into IKC's cool air

Last year six new boxes of books came into the Indigenous Knowledge Centre (Library) for Coordinator Carol Toby to record and shelve for readers. She said those and the magazines they had – including Girlfriend, Donna Hay and Better Homes & Gardens – were almost as popular as the air-conditioned lounge space.

“Young people come to the library, grab a magazine, and sit down in the cool air to read,” she said.

“We’ll also did some school holiday activities with Councillors Nandy and Wallace.

“We have activities going every Monday and Tuesday, and a CDEP worker comes in and helps us with that.

“We’re also always hoping parents will come in and work alongside us, to help us with the children, everyone is welcome here.”



*Top: from teens to tots, all enjoying the IKC's cool surrounds including (above) Evelyn Haines, Benjamin Deeral & Keshiah Sykes enjoying the day and each other's company on the computers*

# Focus on: Technical Services...

Since the last newsletter **Technical Services Manager, Jaime Guedes** (pictured on the right with **Depot Foreman Billy Harrigan**) reports quite a few things have been happening.

Improvements to the water infrastructure have been supported by the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

Part of that work will be the construction of a new raw water rising main from the river intake to the water treatment plant, construction of a new reticulation water main to service the residents along the south side of the Bloomfield River, and there will be a number of small improvements to the water treatment plant.

This work will compliment improvements to the water system achieved over the past three years. Essential Services continues to return a high level of monthly compliance of potable water and waste water analysis as per the licensing requirements. Essential Services Officer Graham Harris was pleased to report sewerage and water plant workers Rodney, Raymond, Herbie and Clive are on full time employment with the Council.

Mr Harris said everything is running well and the new intake is operating as envisaged.

In regards to road access to the community, there are two new exciting projects on the horizon Council has worked hard to achieve.

One of the most significant improvements to the local road network will be the construction of a bridge across the Bloomfield River which will reduce the number of isolation days and mitigate risk. A business case has been approved, preliminary drilling and hydrology analysis have been completed and the final design is currently being carried out, weather permitting.

The other significant project is the construction of a bridge over the Woobadda River. It is hoped that its construction will be carried out this year. Council's Parks and Garden's division has continued to maintain all our public areas to a high standard.



With the high level of rainfall lately, the gang has redoubled their efforts and as a result, Council has received many compliments about how tidy the community looks.

Weed control (natural asset management) is another activity Technical Services has been quietly involved in for the past few years, the results of which are now beginning to bear fruit.

It was pleasing to see our work on this has been recognised and Council was able to secure funds for the acquisition of new equipment that will permit us to perform this task more efficiently.

Together with Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC), Technical Services is training/inducting council staff on the agreed regional standards and procedures.

Our Building Unit, at present, is busy with responsive maintenance, construction of footpaths, driveways and fences and minor renovations.

Surveying of the community has also been carried out as part of a larger process that will ultimately provide Council with a town planning instrument. This work is part of the 40-year lease negotiations being undertaken by the State Housing Department.

Overall it is pleasing to see the dedication and commitment of the workforce which has resulted in programs, projects and services continuing to be delivered to a high standard in a timely and orderly manner.



**Above: Parks & Gardens team members (L-R): Terence Yougie; Charlie Walker; Jeffrey Yougie & Jacky Ball Jnr**



**Above: Builders Gauai Wallace & Bruce Harrigan**

**Above: Essential Service Officers (L-R): Rodney Denman; Herbie Henderson & Clive Sykes**



**Right: Backhoe workers (L-R): Colin Friday, Mervyn Nunn & Geoffrey Rosendale**

# New skills to be put to good use

Environmental Health Worker Reagan 'Bobby' Kulka (*right*) has been training and working hard with Animal Management Officer Eddie Madsen (*below*) on chainsaw and milling courses.

WWASC, along with Northern Skills Alliance supported the pair and Eddie says they are now in a position to start to put some yards up for horse mustering around the community.

"The deadline was 31 January for the yards, which are two full weeks of continuous work, but we should be all set to go after the wet," Mr Madsen said.

High on the list of concerns for both is also dog registration.

Mr Madsen said all dogs should have been registered in December.

Mr Kulka also said residents should be on the lookout for any potential breeding sites for dengue mosquitoes.

"Wujal Wujal has always been good on that, but with the wet underway we should be making sure we're all safe," he said.



## More in store

**Wujal Wujal's retail store is selling a lot of fruit and vegies and trying hard to stock up on items in-demand says store manager Mick Carroll.**

"We're getting more and more different types of things in that people want, different lines," he said.

"Selling a lot of fruit and vegies, which is great, a lot more healthy food, doing a fair bit of electrical type of things as well.

"But when people want something we can get it for them, that's not a problem."

He said staff Junibel, Karen and Reatha would all be participating in retail training in Hopevale this month.

"We depend on them and they're all doing a really good job," he said.

"That's what Island and Cape is all about, employing local people.

"One day they'll be able to run the



*Above: Working in the Retail Store is Mick Carroll, Junibel Doughboy, Reatha Williams, Karen Baird & Christine Carroll*

whole store by themselves and they won't need us at all.

"Our main aim is to train them in all aspects.

"It'll be really good for them and they'll have no worries with that because they do everything that's on that training course already."



BIG crowds turned out at Cooktown in far north Queensland for the second John Bowen Memorial Indigenous rugby league carnival in mid-December. Eight teams battled it out in the

men's division with Yarrabah Seahawks defeating Mossman Rainforest Dragons 44-14 in the grand final on December 12. Players came from Hopevale Aboriginal Community,

Cooktown, Wujal Wujal, Mossman, Coen, Cairns, Yarrabah and even as far away as Townsville. In a ladies exhibition game, Mossman Sharkettes defeated the Hopevale side.



# Sports & Rec bringing on successes



Pic above and top left on previous page courtesy Cr Zelia Wallace

**Wujal Wujal's OzTag team did well in the Cooktown comp to reach the finals last year says Cr Zelia Wallace, who is also the PCYC's Sport & Recreation Officer for the community.**

Cr Wallace has had a busy few months with a CRC camp in Cairns and, back in October, supporting an under-18 team in the Cairns All Blacks Carnival (*pictured facing page*).

Discos for youth and Zumba have also been on the agenda.

"The sports committee still going good, our members are Samantha Hooker, Charmaine Nandy, Jody Minniecon as the school representative, Nikki Gong,

Garry Ashworth, and Councillors Allister Gibson and Talita Nandy," she said.

"The mayor attended the last committee meeting as well, and it's open to the community, any community people are welcome to join if they're interested.

"I'd just like to congratulate all our players for their hard work last year, everyone has tried really hard and it's been great to be able to take our young players in particular to events outside of the community.

"Everyone so far has been really well-behaved and we hope 2011 will be just as successful."

## Tamina shows all-round AFL talent

**Playing centre, back and forward in AFL means Tamina Bassani likes to run...a lot.**

At just 14-years-old she says AFL is her favourite sport and she's pictured here between mates, Dallas Walker and Shanna Olbar.

Her team is the Brisbane Lions and because of her commitment to playing for the Cooktown Cluster in the Cape Crusaders comp in the NPA last year, she's had the opportunity to see games both at the Gabba and the MCG.





***CDEP market gardeners held their first plant sale in December last year, with some moderate sales and successes (and a free sausage sizzle to boot!). Pictured from left to right is Jarret Bassani; Roderick Nunn Snr; Derek Flewell-Smith; Davina Nunn; Roderick Nunn Jnr; Robyn Wing (trainer); Andrew Creek and Lance Green***



***Enjoying a cup of tea at the HACCS last December was baby Kyasha Jacko, Jasmin Obah, Mabel Yougie and Lorraine Baird***